

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT CH UR

SUBJ: COMMENTS BY SOVIET EMBASSY OFFICIALS ON PRC
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

REF: MOSCOW 2267

1. IN CONVERSATION FEBRUARY 20 WITH DC HOLDRIDGE, SOVIET EMBASSY COUNSELLOR V.P. FEDOTOV EXPRESSED VIEW THAT CURRENT PRC ANTI-LIN PIAO - ANTI-CONFUCIUS CAMPAIGN WOULD PROBABLY CONTINUE FOR SOME TIME. HE AGREED WITH DC THAT NO PARTICULAR LEADING INDIVIDUAL HAD YET BEEN TARGETTED BY CAMPAIGN BUT FELT THAT LATER STAGES OF CAMPAIGN MIGHT WELL FOCUS UPON SOME PARTICULAR LEADER OR LEADERS. HE EXPRESSED OPINION THAT AN ACUTE STRUGGLE MIGHT DEVELOP, AND POINTED TO SIMILARITIES BETWEEN SOME OF PHRASEOLOGY USED TODAY ON "STRUGGLE" WITH PHRASES USED IN EARLY STAGES OF CULTURAL REVOLUTION. HE NOTED HOWEVER, THAT SO FAR NO BASIC CHANGES IN PRC FOREIGN OR DOMESTIC POLICIES ARE YET OBSERVABLE OTHER THAN INTENSIFICATION OF ANTI-SOVIET PROPAGANDA AND INCREASE IN CHINESE CHAUVINISM, E.G., TIGHTENING UP IN PRC CULTURAL
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RELATIONS WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

2. WITH REFERENCE TO PRC ANTI-SOVIET LINE, FEDOTOV HAD BEEN STRUCK BY "PEOPLE'S DAILY" ARTICLE OF FEBRUARY 19 BY HSIN FENG ON SUBJECT OF LIN PIAO'S ALLEGED EFFORTS IN 1960 AFTER BUCHAREST CONFERENCE TO OPPOSE MAO TSE-TUNG'S STRUGGLE AGAINST SOVIETS AND IN EFFECT RESTORE FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH USSR. FEDOTOV REASONED FROM THIS ARTICLE THAT SENTIMENT FOR IMPROVEMENT IN PRC-USSR RELATIONS WAS STRONG AT THAT TIME AND MIGHT STILL REMAIN IN SOME PRC QUARTERS. HE PERSONALLY LOOKED TO THOSE ON PRC "LEFT" AS POSSIBLE ADVOCATES OF IMPROVED PRC-USSR RELATIONS, AS WELL AS SOME OF RECENTLY-TRANSFERRED PLA REGIONAL COMMANDERS. (IMPLICIT IN THIS LINE OF REASONING WAS HOPE THAT IF ACUTE INTRA-PARTY STRUGGLE DOES IN FACT DEVELOP WITHIN CCP, ELEMENTS MORE CONGENIAL TO USSR THAN PRESENT LEADERSHIP WILL WIN OUT.)

3. FEDOTOV HAD HEARD SOMETHING OF PURPORTED MAO TSE-TUNG CIRCULAR LETTER ON 8-STAGE CAMPAIGN TO CRITICIZE LIN PIAO AND CONFUCIUS, BUT DID NOT ADMIT TO KNOWING ANYTHING CONCRETE ABOUT SUBJECT MATTER OF EACH STAGE. HE ASKED FOR ANY INFORMATION DC COULD PROVIDE.

4. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH USLO OFFICER, SOVIET EMBASSY COUNSELLOR HUKHROV DID NOT SEEM TO BE PUSHING ANY PARTICULAR LINE IN HIS ANALYSIS OF CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE IDEOLOGICAL CAMPAIGN. HE SAW IT MOVING INTO A NEW STAGE IN EARLY FEBRUARY WITH GREATER MASS PARTICIPATION, BUT STILL COVERING A BROAD RANGE OF SUBJECTS WITH NO SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUAL TARGETS COMING CLEARLY INTO VIEW. HE SAID THAT INDIVIDUALS AT THE PLANT MANAGER OR SECTION CHIEF LEVEL WERE BEING CRITICIZED AND THAT HIGHER LEVEL OFFICIALS MIGHT COME UNDER ATTACK LATER, BUT HE SAID IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO SAY HOW HIGH UP IN THE HIERARCHY THIS WOULD GO.

5. CHUKHROV AGREED WITH USLO OFFICER'S COMMENT THAT INTENSIFIED ANTI-SOVIET POLEMIC WAS CONNECTED WITH DOMESTIC IDEOLOGICAL CAMPAIGN, NOTING THAT ANTI-SOVIET ASPECT GAVE CONCRETE CONTENT TO ISSUES WHICH OTHERWISE MIGHT NOT STIR THE MASSES. HE SAID ANTI-SOVIET PROPAGANDA HAD INCREASED SHARPLY ABOUT TIME OF TENTH PARTY CONGRESS AND HAD REMAINED AT HIGH LEVEL THROUGHOUT THE CONFIDENTIAL

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CAMPAIGN.

6. CHUKHROV SAID THAT SOVIET TRAVEL HAS BEEN TIGHTLY RESTRICTED, NOTING THAT LAST WEEK SOVIET EMBASSY HAD REQUESTED PERMISSION TO MAKE ANNUAL VISITS TO RUSSIAN MILITARY CEMETERIES IN CONNECTION WITH OBSERVANCE OF RED ARMY DAY. VISITS TO ALL FIVE CEMETERIES, FOUR OF WHICH ARE LOCATED IN THE NORTHEAST AND ONE IN WUHAN, WERE TURNED DOWN AS INCONVENIENT.

7. CHUKHROV SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHEN SOVIET BORDER NEGOTIATORS ILICHEV OR GANKOVSKY WOULD RETURN TO PEKING, BUT ADDED THAT THEY WOULD RETURN ANYTIME THERE WAS POSSIBILITY OF PRODUCTIVE DISCUSSIONS. IN CURRENT ATMOSPHERE, HOWEVER, HE FELT THERE WAS LITTLE PROSPECT OF PROGRESS.

8. COMMENT: VARYING ANALYSES BY SOVIET OBSERVERS, INCLUDING KAPITSA'S HIGHLY POLICY ORIENTED OBSERVATIONS (REFTEL), SUGGEST THAT NO FIRM SOVIET LINE ON CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN CHINA HAS BEEN FORMULATED. ARTICLE IN FEBRUARY 22 "PEOPLE'S DAILY" BY NCNA CORRESPONDENT SHU PING ENTITLED "SOVIET RENEGADE CLIQUE AND CONFUCIUS" SUGGESTS, HOWEVER, THAT ANTI-SOVIET ASPECT OF PRESENT DOMESTIC IDEOLOGICAL CAMPAIGN WILL BECOME INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT. JENKINS

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